

Theoretical and Methodological Aspects of Innovative Management of Corporate Interactions in Transport

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Keywords: System of intra-corporate interaction, sustainable development of the corporation, coordination structure, organizational inertia, strategic management, organizational ecology, organizational systematics, adaptation of the corporation, relational contract, cooperative interaction.

Abstract: The article suggests the use of new theoretical and methodological approaches in building long-term cooperative relationships in the "Russian Railways Corporation – Transport Universities" system. The historical context of intra and inter-corporate interaction is analysed, the objective function of strategic corporate governance is identified and the conditions for its implementation are outlined the formation of business competencies and innovations. The main approaches in the problem field of implementing adaptive capabilities of corporations are highlighted, methodological contradictions between strategic management, organizational ecology and organizational systematics are revealed. The basis for eliminating contradictions within the framework of building a model of long-term cooperative relationships based on a relational contract is proposed. As an illustrative example, the system of relations "Russian Railways Corporation – Transport Universities" is considered, the framework possibilities of cooperative relationships are named, the directions of development of these relationships in the direction of the balance of innovative changes and organizational inertia are highlighted.

1 INTRODUCTION

Current trends in the development of intra- and inter-corporate relationships show that the Russian economy has not yet developed a systematic vision of the need to build cooperative relationships aimed at long-term sustainable development. Meanwhile, in recent years, the volume of work considering the factors of adaptation of corporations to changing environmental conditions has been increasing. Approaches from the point of view of strategic management, organizational ecology, organizational systematics (Baum, J.A.C., 1990; Hannan, 1989; McKelvey, 1982) enrich the understanding of the realities in which modern corporations operate, and form the desire to develop mutually beneficial contracts on a pragmatic basis to increase the synergetic effect of joint activities of the subjects of relations.

Defining the concept of "corporation", we proceed from understanding it as a large association created for the purpose of economic activity in a certain area of the market and aimed at improving efficiency through the rational use of resources.

Today, the target function of the system of corporate interactions can be considered sustainable development based on business competencies and competitive advantages that allow adapting to constantly changing environmental conditions. The product of the functioning of corporations should be innovative in nature, which reflects its focus on following the trends of the time with the comprehensive development of all participants in corporate relationships and society as a whole.

2 MANUSCRIPT PREPARATION

The paradigm of corporate governance is deeply rooted in modern scientific approaches to determining the essence of intra and interorganizational relations. At the same time, the historical context makes it possible to identify a serious methodological shift in understanding the essence and objectives of such interaction. Our earlier analysis of this context (Gusev, 2018) allowed us to identify several fundamental stages in the evolution of the system of corporate interactions (see Figure 1).

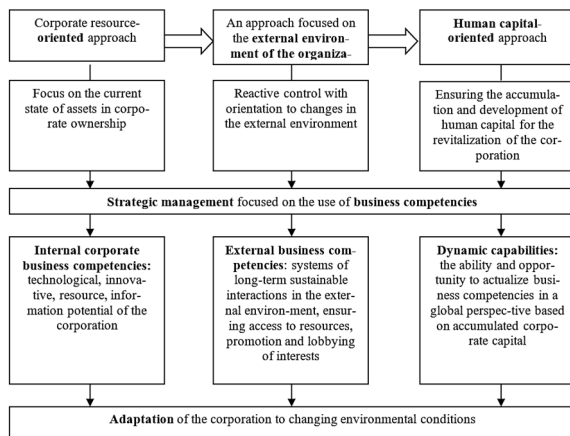


Figure 1: Evolution of the corporate interaction system.

The resource-oriented approach of the corporation limits the potential prospects for its development to the scope of controlled assets, which does not allow to go beyond this asset register and build a long-term perspective for the development of the corporation. The principle of orientation to the external environment, characteristic of the second stage of evolution, allows us to overcome this problem, but at the same time often blocks the breadth of predictive potential by a tendency to extrapolate current and retrospective achievements for the long term. Finally, the third stage increases the emphasis on the creativity of newly made managerial decisions and the activation of the creative potential of human resources, which makes it possible to overcome the predictive isolation of previous approaches, but creates a problem of personnel involvement, which does not always correspond to organizational hierarchical subordination and meets organizational opportunism.

In this regard, we consider a well-founded systematic approach to the implementation of the positions stated in each individual approach, only in the framework of strategic management, combining three levels of actualization of the business competencies of the organization. Under the key business competence, we will further understand the specific factors of the functioning and development of the corporation, which are recognized as basic. The register of key business competencies is formed by the following types:

- internal corporate business competencies determined by technological, innovative, resource, information potential and implemented in the form of business processes, knowhow, staff competencies, experience, etc.;
- business competencies external to the corporation, formed by a system of long-term

relationships and sustainable interactions, access to limited market resources, the ability to promote, lobby and defend the interests of corporations in free markets;

– finally, the dynamic capabilities of business as an integral characteristic of the ability to create new business competencies based on the actualization of the corporation's human capital and the capital of existing intra and intercorporate interactions.

As a target function of strategic corporate governance, it is possible to name the adaptation of the corporation to constantly changing, sometimes turbulent conditions and processes occurring in the external environment. This function fits into the logic of sustainable development (Hill, 1992), aimed at strengthening the current and future potential to meet corporate needs and interests, taking into account the development of human quality of life. The mechanism for implementing the strategy of long-term sustainable development is built on the basis of managing the formation and implementation of innovations, which make it possible to develop business competencies.

It is worth noting a pronounced trend towards an increase in the number of agents interested in such a sustainable development of corporations and society. We agree with C. Hill and T. Johnson (Freeman, 2010; Popkov, 2007), defining the modern essence of corporate interactions as a constant search for a balance of all interested parties (stakeholders). Note that if in the initial versions of the agency stakeholder theory, these stakeholders were understood as primarily financial internal stakeholders, today this list includes a large number of nonfinancial agents and external players. In this configuration, the logic of sustainable development of the corporation increasingly corresponds to the orientation and problems of sustainable development of society as a whole.

Turning from the issues of the strategic orientation of the corporation to the aspects of organizational support for such development, we note that the methodological basis of corporate interaction is a mutually beneficial exchange of resources between individuals and divisions of the corporation. In this regard, the sustainability of a corporation can be understood as a variable depending on the purposeful exchange of a set of resources. The register of resources at the same time includes not only material and financial levers of development, but also information, social, intellectual, organizational resources.

The accumulation of these resources leads to the capitalization of the company, i.e., an increase in its

value, the formation of an image, the development of a brand. As part of the company's value management, it is possible to form the maximum liquidation value of the company (Alexandrova, 2013), which is understood as the capitalization of the corporation recognized by the market. The capital structure of the corporation is also undergoing significant changes: so in the 1970s, most of the company's capital was formed on the basis of intangible values, physical and working capital accounted for about 8090% of the capital structure of the largest corporations from the Fortune 500 list. In the 2000s, the emphasis shifted dramatically: today 90% of the capital of corporations from the same list is formed at the expense of intangible capital, i.e. human capital, intellectual property and brand capital. The revealed trend supports the assumption of expanding the list of resources of the corporation to be capitalized.

The modern organizational paradigm is largely based on the ideas formulated within the framework of the managerial theory of the organization, in which the corporation is considered in a field of opportunities, which often turns into a field of competition for resources and survival. This attitude largely shifts the emphasis of classical economic theory, which reduces the problems of market relations to interactions between producers and consumers. The managerial approach, in contrast, focuses on natural selection at the corporate level. Thus, the contours of two fundamental approaches to assessing the activities of corporations as economic agents are formed (see Figure 2).

At the same time, it is possible to fix a clear tendency to disagreements arising within the framework of the managerial approach to the adaptive capabilities of the corporation. With the apparent unity of the target settings for the adaptation of the corporation to the changing conditions of the external environment, the nature and possibilities of this adaptation are determined by fundamentally different features of corporate external interactions:

1. The concept of strategic management, the theoretical principles of which were disclosed above, considers the flexibility of corporate interactions as the main factor of adaptation that sets the conditions for corporate training.
2. Theories within the framework of organizational ecology, on the contrary, consider the inertia of organizational structures as a factor of long-term survival due to accumulated potential, the transfer of valuable experience, which is formed in the long term and depends on previous development.
3. Finally, organizational systematics defines the class of organizational systems in terms of the stage

of their life cycle – corporations accumulate experience in resolving structural crises related to the dynamics of corporate relations, gradually approaching the stage of their heyday and sustainable development, which allows them to form competitive advantages.

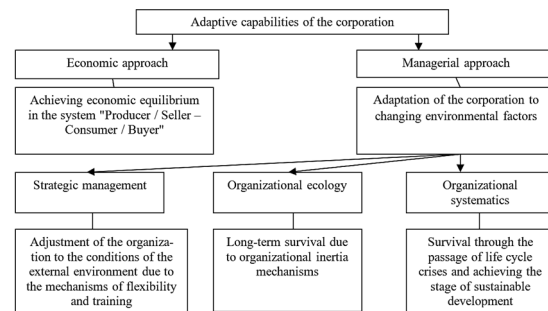


Figure 2: Approaches to the implementation of adaptive capabilities of the corporation.

We point out that each of the presented alternative approaches has serious problems with their unilateral use. Thus, strategic management focuses only on the flexibility and variability of corporate structures and relationships, which is fraught with the loss of valuable experience of structural and dynamic inertia. Focusing only on structural conservatism deprives corporations of innovative developments, personnel development and leads to stagnation.

Taking into account exclusively the factor of the life cycle of a corporation can lead to complacency of the leaders of a corporation that has reached the peak of development and lead to a stability trap when successful corporations quickly lost the achieved level of development and market niche without developing organizational relations.

We consider it fundamentally necessary in the further development of the theoretical and methodological field of corporate relations research and their refraction as organizational and methodological models for the development of real corporations to take into account the application of these approaches only in their joint use.

When assessing the corporate relations of the participants and economic agents of these relations, it is necessary to analyze the nature of these relations. The formed internal corporate strategy, the implementation of a system of partnership and the exchange of resources and knowledge allow you to gain access to limited market opportunities, adapt to negative environmental factors, as well as actively influence market factors, increasing the efficiency of your activities, taking your place in the chain of innovation formation. Long-term survival and

sustainable development of the corporation is possible with the implementation of a system of long-term sustainable interactions.

It is advisable to transfer the logic of building intra-corporate relations to the formation of intercorporate relations. Within the framework of neo-institutional theory, a clear understanding of the forms of coordination of economic activities and business processes has developed, which made it possible to distinguish polar forms of relations ("hierarchical relations market relations") and a large number of hybrid forms (network relationships, strategic alliances, franchises, business ecosystems, etc.) based on cooperative relationships. A comparative analysis of these coordination structures is presented in Table 1.

The market is a coordinating structure where many symmetrical selective exchanges arise, the proportions of which are regulated by the price system (Gusev, 2018), which implies the regulation of the interaction of economic agents by the formal terms of rigid contracts, their economic and organizational independence outside of transactions.

An alternative to market integration is interaction within hierarchical structures with complete corporate isolation. Relations in such structures can vary in terms of authoritarianism – democracy, autocracy – participativeness, limitation – transparency, but in any case they are regulated by formalized relations, regulated by a system of commands.

Finally, the forms of hybrid relations are built on the basis of cooperative interactions. A confidential,

often informal form of interaction allows minimizing the risks associated with market uncertainty and reducing transaction costs arising during negotiation processes, agent searches, quality assessment, etc. On the other hand, excessive inertia, bureaucracy, and static nature of large hierarchical structures can also be compensated by mutually beneficial relationships, finding points of contact and sharing resources, and replicating valuable experience during such interactions.

An important problem area here is the building of a common system of vision of goals, strategies, mechanisms and structures that arise in the sphere of intersection of interests of participants in the process. The initial setting of the theory of management of meanings is aimed at the formation of a common perception of reality, the realization of unity of views, which makes it possible to form a single mental model that motivates transparency of information, replication of best practices, exchange of opinions. All this is ultimately aimed at reducing the opportunism characteristic of large corporations.

We conclude that the diverse activities of corporations require different approaches to the management of its structural elements (divisions) in accordance with their goals, objectives and performance indicators of their functioning. Within the framework of cooperative relationships, there may be relationships with both greater and lesser dependence of their participants, but the freedom of informal relations is always limited to interests determined on mutually beneficial terms and

Table 1: Comparative analysis of coordinating structures in the economy.

Parameter	Coordinating structure		
	market relations	hierarchical relations	hybrid relations (cooperation)
Management system	price system	command system (scalar chain)	trust relational contract
Relationship structure	independence outside the terms of transactions	mechanistic, bureaucratic	project
Relations between (counter) agents	independent	dependent, contractual	interdependent, mutually beneficial
Relationship coordination	contractual relations	formalized relations	formalized relations and informal agreements developed within the framework of the negotiation process
Principles of interaction	Competitive relations, contracts within the framework of ongoing transactions	mutual subordination, subordination when delegating authority	leadership, finding points of contact, sharing resources
Degree of integration	disintegration	full formal integration	quasi-integration

implemented with the help of a coordination center of such a structure.

Ultimately, the nature of the relationships being built takes the form of a game with a nonzero sum (Vasin, 2005), when in the course of mutually beneficial relationships, the effect is achieved by all participants in the interactions.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As an illustrative model example of a system of cooperative relationships within the management of a corporation, we have considered the relationship "Russian Railways Corporation – Transport Universities". As part of the socioeconomic paradigm shift in the 1990s, the nature of relations underwent serious changes: the planned departmental model of university management in a single hierarchical system gave way to a quasimarket model of Customer–Contractor (executor) interactions. Meanwhile, the structural and dynamic inertia of relations that have been developing for decades has not allowed to completely destroy the stable ties between the divisions of Russian Railways (traction directorates, traffic control, railway stations, track repair, heat supply, social sphere, territorial and corporate service centers and many others) and universities. It is these stable ties that will allow us to form an updated pragmatic format of relations, taking into account the accumulated capital of relations.

The objective function of such relations is to meet the needs of certain fields of activity among qualified specialists. Studies (Parshina, 2021) show that the business processes of forming the composition of applicants during the admission campaign to universities, organizing internships by students, performing R&D, distributing graduate students are end-to-end and achieve a positive result only during the joint interaction of responsible parties.

It can be concluded that the formation of unique interspecific human resources is possible only in the course of building long-term corporate relationships based on the exchange of resources and knowledge. The system of these exchanges needs institutionalization, the formation of a common vision and coordination of processes. We also point out that these processes are not included in the current economic activities of the Russian Railways Corporation, which reduces direct involvement in the course of these processes and requires the allocation of special coordinating structures.

We consider it fundamentally necessary to organize such elements in the structure of relations for the intensification, institutionalization and personalization of responsibility within the framework of the coordination of these business processes. The nature of the relationship should be implemented in the form of a trust relational contract. The institute of cooperative relations must comply with the following contractual framework:

– the quality of the formal component of an institutionalized contract is set by a system of legal

Table 2: Directions of development of relations "Russian Railways Corporation – Transport universities".

Type of interaction	Direction of development
Organization of a sustainable process of professional personnel formation	Formation of a risk-oriented approach to the analysis of the internal and external environment of interaction between the participants of the relationship
Passing of production practices	Introduction of a system of organizational training and financial compensation for mentoring
Development of basic educational programs of higher education taking into account the models of professional and corporate competencies of Russian Railways JSC	Inclusion in the approval process, development of the competence matrix, development of requirements for the level of training of graduates
Coordination of the topics of the graduate qualification works with teachers in all areas of training	Systematic participation in the development and updating of the named topics
Quality control of education by representatives of enterprises	Development of a system of formalized assessment of the quality of education (a system of criteria, scales, areas of development)
Conducting training sessions	Participation in the development of educational and methodological complexes of disciplines
Reasonable amount of funding	Development of a transparent decision-making system on the allocation of targeted funding and distribution in areas of training

requirements, as well as departmental, industry, etc. specific regulatory legal acts;

- the development of informal relations and arrangements is rooted in the corporate business culture and the culture of relationships;

- the individualization of unique exchange systems creates opportunities for the implementation of the relational component of contracting.

Thus, in the course of building cooperative relationships at a high level, both short-term changes in the framework of strategic management and long-term innovations based on the structural and dynamic inertia of stable relationships can be manifested. The register of specific directions for reviving relations in the "Russian Railways Corporation – Transport Universities" system is presented in Table 2.

Of course, this list is not exhaustive and can be supplemented with other points of contact. The formation and implementation of a relational trust contract should lead to the formation of a full-fledged management system for industry education and interactions in the "Russian Railways Corporation Transport Universities" system, based on a mutually beneficial resource exchange.

4 CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of modern theoretical and methodological approaches to the system of cooperative relationships made it possible to identify as the basic theories of strategic management, organizational ecology and organizational systematics. These theories are relatively new, mutually contradictory, which requires the formation of a common problem field. Within the framework of building common corporate priorities for long-term sustainable development, we propose that corporations focus on cooperative relationships on a pragmatic basis. Prolonged stagnation, as well as constant variability, is not evolutionarily justified.

The analysis of the relationship system "Russian Railways Corporation – Transport Universities" made it possible to see the possibility of resource exchange, cooperative relationships based on both innovative changes and the potential of organizational inertia, equally aimed at increasing the synergetic effect. Actualization of both the identified development directions and many other points of contact, institutionalization and coordination of existing and potentially possible exchange processes will allow achieving the goals of sustainable development of corporations and society.

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